

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method of routing a flow of frames for a core-edge switch configuration, the core-edge switch configuration configured to receive frames at an edge switch, route ~~them~~ the frames to a core switch and then route ~~them~~ the frames to an edge switch for transmission, the method comprising:

receiving at least one frame of the flow of frames at an edge switch of the core-edge switch configuration;

applying a process at one switch in the core-edge switch configuration to select a route through at least two switches forming the core-edge switch configuration for said at least one frame of the flow of frames to balance frame traffic through the core-edge switch configuration; and

transmitting said at least one frame from an edge switch of the core-edge switch configuration.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said process comprises a pseudo-random process.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein applying said pseudo-random process comprises applying a hash function.

4.-5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein said hash function is applied to possible routes through the core-edge switch configuration to balance the flow of frames through the core-edge switch configuration to an external exit port of the core-edge switch configuration.

7.-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said process comprises applying weights

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20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said weights are applied to possible routes through the core-edge switch configuration to balance the flow of frames through the core-edge switch configuration to an external port of the core-edge switch configuration.

21.-28. (Cancelled)

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said route is selected based at least in part on a source tag and/or a destination tag added to said frame after said frame enters a switch of the core-edge switch configuration.

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30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein said source tag and/or said destination tag is stripped off said frame before said frame exits the core-edge switch configuration.

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said switches of said configuration comprise Fibre Channel compliant switches.

33. (Previously Presented) A switch fabric comprising:  
at least a first switch and a second switch, said first and said second switch being communicatively coupled;

said first switch including:

at least two core switches;

at least two edge switches coupled to said at least two core switches so that a flow of frames is from an edge switch to a core switch to an edge switch to develop a core-edge switch configuration; and

routing logic associated with a switch which selects a route through at least two switches forming said core-edge switch configuration for a frame of said flow of frames to balance the frame traffic through said core-edge switch configuration.

34. (Previously Presented) The switch fabric of claim 33, wherein said routing logic pseudo-randomly selects a route for said frame of said flow of frames.

35. (Previously Presented) The switch fabric of claim 34, wherein said routing logic pseudo-randomly selects said route by applying a hash function.

36.-37. (Cancelled)

38. (Previously Presented) The switch fabric of claim 35, wherein said routing logic applies said hash function to possible routes through said core-edge switch configuration to balance the flow of frames through said core-edge switch configuration to an external exit port of said core-edge switch configuration.

39.-50. (Cancelled)

51. (Previously Presented) The switch fabric of claim 33, wherein said routing logic applies weights to select said route .

52. (Previously Presented) The switch fabric of claim 51, wherein said weights are applied to possible routes through said core-edge switch configuration to balance the

flow of frames through said core-edge switch configuration to an external port of said core-edge switch configuration.

53.-60. (Cancelled)

61. (Previously Presented) The switch fabric of claim 33, wherein said routing logic selects said route based at least in part on a source tag and/or a destination tag added to said frame after said frame enters a switch of said core-edge switch configuration.

62. (Previously Presented) The switch fabric of claim 61, wherein one of said core or edge switches strips said source tag and/or said destination tag off said frame before said frame exits said core-edge switch configuration.

63. (Cancelled)

64. (Previously Presented) The switch fabric of claim 33, wherein said first and second switches comprise a Fibre Channel compliant switches.

65. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:  
a switch, said switch including:  
at least two core switches;  
at least two edge switches coupled to said at least two core switches so that a flow of frames is from an edge switch to a core switch to an edge switch to develop a core-edge switch configuration; and  
routing logic associated with a switch which selects a route through at least two switches forming said core-edge switch configuration for a frame of said flow of frames to balance frame traffic through said core-edge switch configuration.

66. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein said routing logic pseudo-randomly selects a route for said frame of said flow of frames.

67. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 66, wherein said routing logic pseudo-randomly selects said route by applying a hash function.

68.-69. (Cancelled)

70. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 67, wherein said routing logic applies said hash function to possible routes through said core-edge switch configuration to balance the flow of frames through said core-edge switch configuration to an external exit port of said core-edge switch configuration.

71.-82. (Cancelled)

83. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein said routing logic applies weights to select said route.

84. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 83, wherein said weights are applied to possible routes through said core-edge switch configuration to balance the flow of frames through said core-edge switch configuration to an external port of said core-edge switch configuration.

85.-92. (Cancelled)

93. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein said routing logic selects said route based at least in part on a source tag and/or a destination tag added to said frame after said frame enters a switch of said core-edge switch configuration.

94. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 93, wherein one of said core or edge switches strips said source tag and/or said destination tag off said frame before said frame exits said core-edge switch configuration.

95. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein said switch comprises a Fibre Channel compliant switch.

96. (Cancelled)

97. (Previously Presented) A network comprising:  
a host;  
a physical storage unit; and  
a first switch communicatively coupled to said host and said physical storage unit;  
said first switch including:  
at least two core switches;  
at least two edge switches coupled to said at least two core switches so that a flow of frames is from an edge switch to a core switch to an edge switch to develop a core-edge switch configuration; and  
routing logic associated with a switch which selects a route through at least two switches forming said core-edge switch configuration for a frame of said flow of frames to balance frame traffic through said core-edge switch configuration.

98. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 97, wherein said routing logic pseudo-randomly selects said route for said frame of said flow of frames.

99. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 98, wherein said routing logic pseudo-randomly selects said route by applying a hash function.

100.-101. (Cancelled)

102. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 99, wherein said routing logic applies said hash function to possible routes through said core-edge switch configuration to balance the flow of frames through said core-edge switch configuration to an external exit port of said core-edge switch configuration.

103.-113. (Cancelled)

114. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 97, wherein said routing logic applies weights to select said route.

115. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 114, wherein said weights are applied to possible routes through said core-edge switch configuration to balance the flow of frames through said core-edge switch configuration to an external port of said core-edge switch configuration.

116.-123. (Cancelled)

124. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 97, wherein said routing logic selects said route based at least in part on a source tag and/or a destination tag added to said frame after said frame enters a switch of said core-edge switch configuration.

125. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 97, wherein one of said core or edge switches strips said source tag and/or said destination tag off said frame before said frame exits said core-edge switch configuration.

126.-157. (Cancelled)